

InterOffice Memo

Department of Workforce Development
Division of Workforce Solutions

Date: May 24, 2004

To: Workforce Development Board Executive Directors, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) youth program managers and leads

From: Connie Colussy, Director
Bureau of Workforce Programs

Subject: **Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Policy Update 04 - 06
Younger Youth Skill Attainment**

Purpose

This WIA youth policy update provides guidance to local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), WIA youth program managers, leads and case managers on the following:

- Objective assessment,
- Development of appropriate, well-written, younger youth skill attainment goals,
- Documentation to verify accomplishment of younger youth skill attainment goals, and
- Recording younger youth skill attainment goals in Automated System Support for Employment and Training (ASSET).

Policy and legislative references

- WIA legislation, section 129(c)(1)(B), WIA regulations, 20 CFR 664.405(a)(2), 20 CFR 666.100(a)(3)(i)(A) and Department of Labor (DOL) training employment guidance letters (TEGLs) number, 3-99, pages 4, 5, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 7-99, pages 21-23, 9-00, pages 4-5, 18-00 page 9, 28-01, pages 4-5
- Department of Workforce Development/Division of Workforce Solutions (DWD/DWS) WIA program guide, part 2, page 24, 109, 110, 111, 115, 117, 118

Background

WIA legislation, Section 129(c)(1)(B) requires local WIA youth programs to include an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for each youth participant. The ISS must include an employment goal (including nontraditional employment where suitable), appropriate achievement objective and appropriate services based on an objective assessment of academic levels, skill levels and service needs. Skill attainment goals are required for in-school and out-of-school youth; skill attainment goals include basic, occupational or work readiness skill goals. The ISS is developed by the young people and their case managers and should reflect the wants and needs of the young people. It should be updated on a regular basis as young people achieve the goals they have set for themselves.

During the period from January 27 through March 7, 2003, the United States (U.S.) Department of Labor (DOL), Region V staff, conducted reviews of Wisconsin's WIA Title I-B program operations for youth. The scope of the review included performance outcomes, expenditures, governance, memoranda of understandings (MOUs), one-stop implementation, policies and procedures, eligible services, oversight and management information and reporting systems.

The U.S. DOL report resulting from the review contained four observations pertaining to younger youth skill attainment. The observations were:

- Younger youth skill attainment goals, which include basic, occupational and work readiness goals entered in ASSET, did not conform to formal WIA definitions;
- WIA program activities for younger youth did not match goals listed in the ISS;
- Many younger youth skill attainment goals entered in ASSET were not based on an objective assessment and not written in an acceptable manner; and
- There was no documentation found in the case files that verified the youth accomplished the skill attainment goals that were listed in the ISS.

The younger youth skill attainment policy was distributed in draft form for a 30-day review and comment period in March 2004. The final policy contained in this document includes revisions in response to the comments received.

Policy Guidance

- WDBs must provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels and service needs of each participant. A new objective assessment is not required if the youth activity service provider determines it is appropriate to use a current assessment completed for another education and training program.
- Assessment strategies should include both formal and informal assessment tools. Formal assessments should include some type of standardized procedure, such as a written test or a performance-based assessment with a standardized scoring method. The formal assessments used shall include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs and developmental needs. Informal assessment tools are subjective and address different characteristics than the formal assessment tools. Informal assessments are less threatening and are generally more enjoyable activities for young people; however, they require more time to administer, and demand thoughtful interpretations. **(See Attachment B for definitions.)**
- Age-appropriate skill attainment goals must be based on the objective assessment and include basic, occupational and work readiness goals. A maximum of three skill attainment goals per year may be set for younger youth performance measure purposes; however, additional goals may also be set. Younger youth that are in school must have, at a minimum, one skill attainment goal set per year. Younger youth that are in school or out of school and have been determined to be basic skills deficient must have a basic skill goal identified in their ISS. The goals must be attained/accomplished no later than one year from the date they were set. **(See Attachment A on assessment and effective goal-setting.)**
- WDBs need to provide documentation to determine whether a youth has met the skill attainment goals set in the ISS. Documentation must include pre-assessment and post-assessment results.
- WDBs must record attained and unattained skill attainment goals on the youth skill attainment screen in ASSET. The attained goals are recorded in the quarter they are achieved. The unattained goals are recorded one-year from the time the goal was set. (Unattained goals will not appear in the denominator until after the goal's one-year anniversary date.) The following directions list the steps for recording skill attainment goals in ASSET.

Short-term goals for performance measurement:

These steps should be followed if the goal is to count in the younger skill attainment rate:

1. Select the goal type,
2. Define the goal,
3. Check the "performance related goal" box,
4. Enter contract ID,
5. Select of modify goal attainment status,
6. Enter goal set date,
7. Enter planned date of attainment (no more than one-year from date set),
8. Enter date the goal is attained (and change the goal attainment status to ensure proper performance reporting), and
9. Enter in comments, which may describe why a specific goal is or is not to be considered for the younger skill attainment rate.

Long-term goal for Individual Service Strategy:

These steps should be followed for recording long-term goals:

1. Select the goal type,
2. Define the goal,
3. Enter contract ID,
4. Select of modify goal attainment status,
5. Enter goal set date,
6. Enter planned date of attainment,
7. Enter date when the goal is attained (and change the goal attainment status for data warehouse report accuracy), and
8. Enter in comments, which may indicate why this long-term goal is being set.

Action Required:

- WDBs should review with WIA youth staff, case managers and youth service providers the objective assessment process and the various types, both formal and informal, of assessment tools that can be used to assess youth objectively.
- WDBs should review, with WIA staff, case managers and service providers, definitions pertaining to younger youth skill attainment that are contained in WIA legislation rules, regulations and U.S. DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs).
- WDBs should provide technical assistance and training (TAT) to WIA youth staff, case managers and youth service providers on developing and writing clear, well defined, measurable and attainable younger youth skill attainment goals. In addition, WDBs should provide TAT on how to record short- and long-term skill attainment goals on the ASSET younger youth skill attainment screen.
- WDBs should develop policies and procedures, including monitoring procedures, to ensure appropriate documentation is provided in case files that verify the skill goals listed in the ISS have been attained and to assess the extent to which WIA requirements are being met.

Additional References:

DWD/DWS WIA Title I-B Performance Measure Map: A Guide to Performance Reporting and the ASSET System

http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/staff/technical_assistance/technical_assistance_guides.htm

DWD/DWS WIA Title I-B Youth Program Indicators of Performance Technical Assistance Guide

http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/staff/technical_assistance/technical_assistance_guides.htm

DOL "Paper and Process: How Youth Programs Manager Program Intake, ISS Development and Case Files"

http://www.doleta.gov/youth_services/Tech_assistance.cfm

ASSET Users Guide, 3 –5, pages 1 – 11

http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/manuals/asset/pdf/ch_3_5cmmanageeps.pdf

Questions and Technical Assistance

If you have questions please feel free to contact the local program liaison (LPL) assigned to your area.

Attachment A	Information on goal-setting and examples of appropriate, well-written, younger youth, basic, occupational and work readiness skill Youth, basic, occupational and work readiness skill goals
Attachment B	WIA definitions
Attachment C	Summary of key, youth related, federal WIA legislation, rules, regulations and TEGs

Note:

This policy update can be viewed at

http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dwdwia/wia/wia_laws_regulations.htm

Cc: Local Program Liaisons
BWP Policy Staff
Job Service District Directors
BWP files

Attachment A

GOAL-SETTING STARTS AT ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the foundation of good planning for youth services. Workforce Investment Act (WIA) legislation, Section 129(c)(1)(A), requires Workforce Development Boards to provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels and service needs. Assessment shall include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs and developmental needs of each participant.

The objective assessment of basic, occupational and work readiness skills should include the following:

- Ability to read and do math at the ninth-grade level or higher;
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in written materials;
- Ability to solve complex problems where hypotheses must be formed and tested, make decisions and think creatively;
- Reliability, a positive attitude, a willingness to work hard and self confidence;
- Effective management of time, money, materials space and other resources;
- Ability to work on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate and work well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds;
- Ability to perform basic computer tasks, such as word processing, manipulating data, using a spreadsheet or data base program and accessing information from the Internet;
- Ability to understand social, organizational and technical systems and design or improve systems; ability to monitor and correct performance; and
- Ability to select equipment and tools, apply technology to specific tasks and maintain and troubleshoot equipment.

Effective Goal-Setting

- Starts with a thorough review of the information obtained during objective assessment;
- Participant must be actively involved in the goal-setting process from the very start;
- Participant feels ownership for their goals;
- Mutual agreement is vital; and
- Goals are achievable, clear and well defined, measurable, realistic, quantifiable, and success-oriented.

Goals identified through the objective assessment process may be categorized in a number of ways. Each type of goal identified is equally important to the development, effectiveness and the overall performance of the program for the participant. Goals should lay the groundwork for completing secondary school, preparing the participant for post-secondary educational opportunities and unsubsidized employment, and becoming a responsible caring adult.

There are two types of goals identified in WIA. These are (1) goals set and counted towards performance (skill attainment) and (2) goals that are personal in nature for the participant.

The goals not counted for skill attainment performance include:

- Personal goals
- Employment goals
- Career goals
- Educational goals

Personal Goal:	These are goals a youth may set for themselves. They may be specific to the youth or to the youth's family. An example of a personal goal is: John will volunteer at homeless shelter.
Employment Goal:	These are goals a youth may set in terms of a specific job or a particular field. An example of an employment goal is: Betsy will explore jobs in the Housing Industry.
Career Goal:	These are goals a youth may set in terms of what they want to do when they finish their formal education. An example of a career goal is: Ashley wants a Career in the Health Care Industry.
Education Goal:	These goals relate to academic achievement, as well as developing life-long learning skills important for success. Examples of educational goals are: Jane wants to improve school attendance, become a tutor or enroll in self-development classes.

One of the core indicators of performance for younger youth is skill attainment. These goals must relate to basic skills, occupational skills or work readiness skills. Skill attainment goals must be based on an objective assessment. If a younger youth is basic skill deficient, the youth must have a basic skill goal set. A maximum of three skill attainment goals per year may be set for younger youth performance purposes; however, additional goals may be set. If more than three goals are set, locals must "check" in Automated Systems Support for Employment and Training (ASSET) the three goals they want counted toward performance.

A target date for accomplishing each skill attainment goal must be set. The target date must be no later than one year from the date the goal is set. Progress toward these goals should be continuously assessed. Once a goal has been attained, a subsequent goal should be set.

Skill attainment goals can be classified as short- or long-term goals for performance or reporting purposes. Short-term goals are a series of incremental, interim, measurable milestones and action steps that enable the young person to experience regular "wins". The goals are used to determine if actual progress is being made toward the participant's established goals in the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Short-term goals are linked to skill attainment in the areas of basic skills, occupational skills and work readiness and must be attainment within one year from the date set to be counted as a positive result. Short-term goals can be attained in a shorter period of time, such as two or three months. The goals should be reassessed and updated as the participant moves through the program.

Long-term skill attainment goals must relate to short-term youth outcome measures. The goals are set around educational attainment, placement in employment, education and/or training. Long-term goals are more exit-oriented and address desirable outcomes that set the criteria for deciding when the participant needs no additional services, other than follow-up. A series of short-term goals that count for performance should lead to attainment of the long-term goal.

Categories of skill attainment goals used for performance purposes include:

- Basic skill goals
- Occupational skill goals
- Work readiness skill goals

- Basic skill goal:** Basic skill goals are set to reflect a measurable increase in basic education skills, including reading, comprehension, math computation, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, reasoning and the capacity to use these skills.
- Occupational skill goal:** Occupational skill goals measure growth in either of two types of occupational skills.
1. Primary occupational skills encompass the proficiency to perform actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate or advanced levels.
 2. Secondary occupational skills entail familiarity with and use of set-up procedures, safety measures, work-related terminology, record keeping and paperwork, formats, tools, equipment and breakdown and clean-up routines.
- Work readiness skill goals:** Work-readiness skill goals include the world-of-work awareness and the following:
1. Positive work habits, attitudes and behaviors, i.e., punctuality, regular attendance, getting along with others, presenting a neat appearance, exhibiting good conduct, following directions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job;
 2. Developing motivation and adaptability;
 3. Obtaining effective coping and problem-solving skills;
 4. Acquiring an improved self-image;
 5. Labor market knowledge;
 6. Occupational information;
 7. Values clarification and personal understanding;
 8. Job search techniques (resume writing, interviewing skills, filling out job applications and follow-up letters); and
 9. Career planning and decision making

How skill attainment goals relate to reporting goals in ASSET

Sound case management and service provision should include planning through short- and long-term goal setting. Because ASSET is intended to serve as a case management tool from which performance results, programs are managed and federal reports can be produced, there are some functions and data elements that can't be too narrowly prescribed. The case managers share responsibility for understanding the performance measurement system, good participant reporting practices and the benefits of an ISS that integrates both short and long-term goals.

Examples of Short-and Long-Term Goals Linked to Skill Attainment

Short-term basic skill goals	Long-term basic skill goals
Increase one grade level in Math	Receive high school equivalency diploma (HSED)
Increase English proficiency by successfully completing two English courses	Receive General Education Degree (GED)
Successfully complete all course requirements to obtain a high school diploma	Receive four-year college degree
Return to high school and successfully complete Senior year	Receive high school diploma
Successfully complete one-week workshop in Financial Literacy	Receive associate degree in Banking
Successfully complete 6 week writing course	Receive four-year college degree in English
Improve speaking skills	Receive four-year degree in Teaching
Master multiplication tables through 9 x 9	Compete in state Math Contest
Short-term occupational skill goals	Long-term occupational skill goals
Successfully complete Pre-apprenticeship training	Successfully complete apprenticeship program in plumbing
Successfully complete three health classes	Successfully complete state certified co-op in health care education
Successfully complete certified nursing assistant classes	Receive associate degree in Nursing
Successfully complete certified baby sitting class	Successfully obtain license to operate a child care facility
Successfully complete carpentry classes	Obtain a job in housing industry
Successfully complete workshops on repairing small engines	Open business repairing small engines
Learn work-related terminology for the Heat and Air Conditioning Industry	Obtain job Heat and Air Conditioning business
Short-term work readiness skill goals	Long-term work readiness skill goals
Learn to create and use spread sheets	Successfully pass the Certified Public Accountant exam
Attend a workshop on safety procedures in the workplace	Write a safety procedures manual
Obtain skills in operating a chop saw	Receive associate degree in wood working
Obtains drivers license	Successfully complete training to obtain a commercial driving license
Increase teamwork skills through participating on a softball team every Tuesday and Wednesday nights	Pass test to be certified as an empire
Improve showing accountability and reliability	Arrive for work on time for 20 consecutive days
Attend classes on coping skills	Better handle stress
Successfully resolve a problem with lack of dependable transportation	Purchase a car

Attachment B
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT (WIA)
DEFINITIONS PERTAINING TO YOUNGER YOUTH SKILL ATTAINMENT

ADVANCED TRAINING – An occupational skills employment/training program, not funded under Title I-B of the WIA, which does not duplicate training received under Title I. This includes only training outside of the One-Stop, WIA and partner system (i.e., training following exit).

BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT – An individual that computes or solves problems, reads, writes or speaks English at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or a comparable score on a criterion referenced test; or is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family or in society. **NOTE:** Grade level scores below 9.0, i.e., 8.9, should be considered as at or below the 8th grade level.

BASIC SKILLS GOAL – Measurable increase in the basic education skills, including reading comprehension, math computation, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, reasoning and the capacity to use these skills.

CASE MANAGEMENT – The provision of a client-centered approach in the delivery of services, designed to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services, using, where feasible, computer-based technologies and to provide job and career counseling during program participation and after job placement.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION – A private, non-profit organization that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and that has demonstrated expertise and effectiveness in the field of workforce investment.

ELIGIBLE YOUTH – An individual that is not less than age 14 and not more than age 21, is low-income, deficient in basic literacy skills, school dropout, homeless, runaway, foster child, pregnant or a parent, an offender or requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment.

EXITER - A customer that has an inactivation or termination date within the quarter (hard exit date) or that does not receive any WIA-funded or non-WIA funded partner service for 90 days and is not scheduled for future services except follow-up services (soft exit date). Participants may have a gap in service greater than 90 days and be excluded from the core measures due to health/medical conditions and delays before training begins. Once a participant has not received any WIA service for 90 days, except for follow-up services, and there are no future services scheduled (or there is no planned gap in services), then that participant has exited WIA for the purpose of measurement in the exit-based measure.

FAMILY – Two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or decree of court, that are living in a single residence, and are included in one or more of the following categories: (A) a husband, wife and dependent children, (B) a parent of guardian and dependent children; or (C) a husband or wife

FORMAL/STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT – Are inventories or tests that have been developed by experts according to scientific principles of test construction. Formal assessments identify interests, abilities, skills, work values, personalities, career beliefs, and career maturity.

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA EQUIVALENT - A General Education Diploma (GED) or High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) recognized by the state.

INDIVIDUAL SERVICE STRATEGY - Identifies the educational and employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and combination of activities/services for youth to achieve their goals.

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT – Are subjective, are helpful in obtaining information about dreams, goals, strengths, interests, fears, feelings, perceptions, family and peer interaction, prior work experience, challenges, and supportive services.

INTAKE/ENROLLMENT - Process to determine eligibility, collection of core identification and demographic information and conducting an initial assessment of the youth's needs and career goals.

OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT - Process that identifies service needs, academic levels, goals, interests, skill levels, abilities, aptitudes and supportive needs and measures barriers and strengths.

OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS GOAL - The proficiency to perform actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate or advance skill levels. Secondary occupational skills entail familiarity with and use of set-up procedures, safety measures, work-related terminology, record keeping and paperwork, format, tool equipment and materials and breakdown and clean-up routines.

OFFENDER – Any adult or juvenile (A) that is or has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process, for whom services under WIA may be beneficial, or (B) that requires assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH – (A) an eligible youth that is a school dropout, or (B) an eligible youth that has received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent but is basic skills deficient, unemployed or underemployed.

PARTICIPANT - An individual that has been determined to be eligible to participate in and that is receiving services (except follow-up services authorized under WIA) under a program authorized by WIA. Participation shall be deemed to commence on the first day, following determination of eligibility, on which the individual began receiving subsidized employment, training or other services provided by WIA.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION - A program at an accredited degree-granting institution that leads to an academic degree (e.g. AA, AS, BA, BS). Does not include programs offered by degree-granting institutions that do not lead to an academic degree.

QUALIFIED APPRENTICESHIP - A program approved and recorded by the U.S. DOL (Employment and Training Administration)ETA)/Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training (BAT) or by a recognized State Apprenticeship Agency (State Apprenticeship Council). Approval is by certified registration or other appropriate written credential.

SHORT-TERM GOAL - Series of action steps/activities a youth must take to accomplish a long-term goal.

SKILL ATTAINMENT - A WIA performance measure for 14 –18 year old younger youth. One goal minimum per year is required for all in-school youth and any appropriately assessed out-of-school youth that need to attain basic skills, occupational skills or work readiness skills. A maximum of three goals per year may be set for purposes of the youth skill attainment measure. Goals should be set at the point of assessment. Additional goals may be set after assessment when called for by the youth's ISS or when initial goals are attained.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES – Services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIA.

WORK-READINESS SKILLS GOALS - Include world of work awareness, labor market knowledge, occupational information, values clarification and personal understanding, career planning and decision making and job search techniques (resumes, interviewing, applications and follow-up letters). They also encompass survival/daily living skills such as using the phone, telling time, shopping, renting an apartment, opening a bank account and using public transportation. They also include positive work habits, attitudes and behaviors, such as punctuality, regular attendance, presenting a neat appearance, getting along and working well with others, exhibiting good conduct, following instructions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job. This category also entails developing motivation and adaptability, obtaining effective coping and problem-solving skills and acquiring an improved self image.

Attachment C
SUMMARY OF U.S. DOL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTERS (TEGLs)
and
DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
WORKFORCE PROGRAM GUIDE - WIA YOUTH PROGRAM

TEGL 3 – 99

- Program guidance on implementing comprehensive youth services
- Provides guidance transitioning Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) to Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- Provides guidance converting youth competencies under JTPA to WIA skill attainment goals
- Provides examples of converting youth competencies to skill attainment goals
 1. Basic education skills JTPA equivalent to WIA basic skill goals
 2. Pre-employment and work maturity skills JTPA equivalent to WIA work readiness skill goals
 3. Job-specific skills JTPA equivalent to WIA occupational skills goal

TEGL 7 – 99

- Provides guidance on core and customer satisfaction performance measures
- Provides operational parameters for younger youth skill attainment
 1. In-school and any out-of-school assessed to be in need of basic, work readiness and/or occupational skills counted in performance measures
 2. Younger youth, basic skill deficient, must have basic skill goal set per year
 3. Maximum three goals per year
 4. Goal categories: basic, work readiness and occupational skills
 5. Participants with any combination of three types of goals
 - A) Three skill goals same category
 - B) Two skill goals one category and one skill goal in another
 - C) One skill goal each category

TEGL 9 – 00

- Provides guidance on competitive and non-competitive procedures for providing youth activities under WIA, Title I
- Provides guidance on the program design framework
 1. Intake activities such as;
 - Registration
 - Eligibility determination
 2. Objective assessment
 - Identifies service needs,
 - Academic level goals
 3. Individual Service Strategy (ISS)
 - Identifies employment goals
 - Educational objectives
 - Prescribes appropriate services

TEGL 18 – 00

- Provides program guidance on implementation comprehensive youth services
- Provides guidance on enhancing assessment strategies

TEGL 28 – 01

- Provides program guidance on implementation of comprehensive youth services
- Provides guidance on enhancing program performance
- Provides guidance on intake
- Provides guidance on participation in program elements
- Provides guidance on skill attainment
 1. Closely tracking skill attainment for interim way to monitor performance
 2. Skill attainment, particularly in academic areas and positively correlating diploma acquisition and exit placement outcomes
 3. ISS as key tool to track skill attainment and successful completion of short- and long-term goals

DWD/DWS Workforce Program Guide/Section III, Youth Programs

- Provides information on:
 1. Assessment
 2. Individual Service Strategy (ISS)
 3. Skill attainment goals
 4. Program design
 5. Goal setting and performance measures